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Education Evidence Base  
Productivity Commission  
Email: [education.evidence@pc.gov.au](mailto:education.evidence@pc.gov.au)

Dear Commissioner

Overall, the Tasmanian Government considers the analysis undertaken by the Productivity Commission (the Commission) in the *National Education Evidence Base – Draft Report* (the Draft Report) to be sound. The Draft Report's focus on building evaluation capability and removing obstructions to the use of data for research and evidence based decision making is in line with Tasmania's expectations, as outlined in its June 2016 submission to the Commission's inquiry into this matter.

In general, the Tasmanian Government is supportive of the recommendations proposed in the Draft Report. However, it should be noted that some recommendations are closely aligned with work already being progressed through the Data Strategy Group (DSG) on behalf of the Education Council. For example, there is already significant work occurring on a National Education Information Agreement and the recommendation for a Unique Student Identifier has in-principle agreement by the DSG.

A specific area of concern for Tasmania is the proposed establishment of a national institution to support the creation of high quality evidence. Tasmania's view is that it is unnecessary to create a new institution where existing governance structures can already progress this goal.

Therefore, Tasmania does not support draft recommendation 8.1. Rather, Tasmania would prefer that the DSG, on behalf of the Education Council, remains responsible for the overall national education data strategy.

Notwithstanding, Tasmania's concerns with the establishment of a new institution, Tasmania does see merit in pursuing a "bottom-up" approach to evaluating education evidence. Tasmania has a well-developed data collection and also has experience in collaborative evaluation projects, such as recent work with the Australian Bureau of Statistics and Telethon Kids Institute. In this context, Tasmania is well positioned to conduct further research and evaluation.

It should also be noted that the Tasmanian Department of Education's collaboration with the Telethon Kids Institute is progressing work that addresses "The contribution of early childhood education and care", one of the three evidence gaps noted in the Draft Report. This research is comprehensive and aims to understand the contribution of a wider range of factors, including health and the contribution of other early childhood services.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Report.

Yours sincerely

Jeremy Rockliff MP  
Deputy Premier  
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